

## House Republican Press Release

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### Klarides Cites Flaws in “Healthy Beverages Bill” for NO Vote



HARTFORD- State Representative Themis Klarides today expressed disappointment in the changes made to the “Healthy Beverages” legislation by the time it arrived in the House of Representatives early this evening, and voted against what remained of a bill she has fought to see passed for the last several years.

“It breaks my heart, really,” said Representative Klarides. “This is all that was left of a measure that I have consistently fought to get passed for a number of years, and was successful in getting passed last year only to see it vetoed. Now, with a second chance at it, the legislature has turned it into an unworkable bill with multiple contradictions.”

Klarides, who serves as Assistant Minority Leader, was a staunch advocate of last year’s legislation that aimed at combating childhood obesity by restricting the kinds of fatty and sugary foods were made available to them during school hours.

“This version of the bill acknowledges that fat and sugar are bad,” said Klarides. “However, it bans the soda inside vending machines, but fails to ban other sweets that have the same or higher sugar content. It makes no sense. How do you explain to a child why they can have one item and not the other, when they are equally bad for your health?”

Despite her no vote, the measure, SB 373, squeaked through the House by a 76-71 vote. It will now head to Governor M. Jodi Rell for her signature.

Despite the failure of the legislature to address the core issues of childhood obesity, or to pass a bill she feels makes meaningful or effective reforms, Representative Klarides pledged to continue her efforts to curb childhood obesity.

“Childhood obesity continues to be a very serious and growing problem,” she said. “We are not instructing children to make healthy choices and why at school or in the home. Obese children become obese adults, have a poor quality of life, burden the health care system with obesity-related conditions such as heart disease, and pass on their poor nutrition and exercise habits to the next generation. We need to get the problem at its origin, and I will continue to work to do that.”